THE
CATHOLIC RADICAL

"...to foster a society based on creed instead of greed." Peter Maurin

April/May 2019 ***Price: For whatever it's worth.***

All About the Benjamins

by Scott Schaeffer-Duffy

After newly-elected US Representative Ilhan Omar (D-Minnesota) tweeted that support for Israel was "all about the Benjamins" (a reference to 100-dollar bills), the entire House Democratic leadership condemned her for using "anti-Semitic tropes." Omar apologized unequivocally and said, "Anti-Semitism is real and I am grateful for Jewish allies and colleagues who are educating me on the painful history of anti-Semitic tropes." Indeed, for more than a thousand years, despots and race-baiters have riled up impoverished masses to misdirect their anger away from their actual oppressors and toward innocent Jewish people, whom they grossly misrepresented as greedy, financial master-minds. While most remember the anti-Semitism of Nazis and the Ku Klux Klan, fewer recall the hateful, pro-fascist radio broadcasts of Father Charles Coughlin and other examples of Catholic anti-Semitism. One need only attend a performance of *Fiddler on the Roof* to recall how vulnerable Jewish people were in self-proclaimed Christian countries. The attack at the Tree of Life Synagogue in Pittsburgh reminds us how dangerous anti-Semitism remains.

Ricardo Reitmeyer

And yet, is Omar wrong to say that US foreign policy has been hijacked by a wealthy pro-Israel lobby? In early February, the US Senate overwhelmingly passed a bill awarding Israel $38 billion in military aid and encouraging state governments to pass legislation against the Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS) movement by Israel's critics. The first bill in modern US history to denounce nonviolent political and economic activism received vigorous support from lobbyists at the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC). I cannot imagine Congress, in the 1980s, passing similar legislation against activists calling for boycott, divestment, and sanctions against the apartheid government of South Africa. And yet, more than 62 years after Israel forcibly displaced over 800,000 Palestinians and 51 years after it occupied the West Bank, Gaza, and Golan Heights, the vast majority of American politicians refuse to criticize Israeli policy. Oftentimes, after deadly Israeli attacks in Gaza, the West Bank, and Lebanon, Congress actually increases military aid to Israel. Hundreds of reports by international and Israeli human rights organizations documenting Israeli violence against Palestinians have had no traction in Congress.

More than twelve years ago, after making numerous investigative journeys to the Israeli-occupied territories, I joined local activists in an attempt to persuade our member of Congress, Jim McGovern, to go on his own fact-finding trip. To our minds, the situation on the ground spoke for itself. We suggested several respected Israeli organizations which would be

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Pilgrimage to Rome

by Claire Schaeffer-Duffy

In snowy February, I packed for Rome. I was off to join six Catholic Worker women (Johanna Berrigan, Mary Beth Appel, Maria Bergh, Mary Rider, Alice McGary, and Kim Williams) on a trip timed to coincide with the Vatican's global summit on clergy sex abuse scheduled for the 21st through the 24th of the month. One hundred and ninety Church leaders, most of them bishops, were expected to attend the historic meeting. We would be in Rome, as well, for pilgrimage and protest. We were going to pray for the summit and to stand in solidarity with survivors of priestly abuse. We were going, we said, "to speak truth to power."

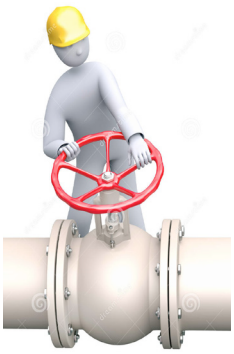
Our adventure had precedent. During the Second Vatican Council, Dorothy Day joined a Rome delegation of women who fasted and prayed for the Church to recognize conscientious objection and condemn nuclear warfare. Years earlier, a young Thérèse of Lisieux, who dreamed of becoming a priest, made her own trip to ask an ageing Pope Leo XIII to let her become a Carmelite nun at 15, six years ahead of the usual age of entry.

In both instances, the women realized their missions. Their example, along with words from Pope Francis, inspired our travel. "The only way we have to respond to the evil that has darkened so many lives," he wrote in a letter to the faithful, "is to experience it as a task regarding all of us as a People of God." So how were "all the People of God" represented in this February meeting of male prelates, asked Johanna, co-founder of the House of Grace

(Continued on Page 3)

Valve Turners

On February 4, 2019, citing recent United Nations conclusions that climate change threatens irreversible harm to the planet, Brenna Cussen-Anglada, Michele Naar-Obed, Daniel Yildrim, and Allyson Polman broke into an Enbridge site housing manual shut off valves near Blackberry, Minnesota in order to stop the flow of tar sands oil. They contacted Enbridge to give the corporation the opportunity to turn off the flow remotely, which the company did. The activists, who call themselves the Four Necessity Valve Turners, were arrested.



They said, "We, a group of Catholic Workers and farmers, are spiritually rooted in and devoted to the care of all life. We are ordinary people without all the answers, and yet we each feel personally called to step into responsibility by standing in the way of this deadly fossil fuel industry, which benefits the few at the expense of all life, especially those who are most vulnerable...."

The activists named themselves after the legal principle that it is sometimes necessary to break minor laws to prevent greater crimes. They face the possibility of five years or more in jail. For more information: https://4necessitymn.wixsite.com/valveturners. Ω

Bearing Witness

by Bob Schaible

Last weekend I was eating brunch alone in Portland when the waiter, noticing my "We are all Palestinians" button, commented, "My sister has a button just like that." That sister lives in Pennsylvania and is active for Palestinian rights. He said he looked forward to telling her about seeing my button. In that same restaurant about a month earlier, another wait staff, a female, looked at another button I like to wear, "End Israeli oppression in Palestine," and asked if I got any comments about it when I was out. She herself is Jewish and favorably disposed to the struggle of Palestinians, but not engaged in the matter.

My answer to her question is one I want to share with you. I told her that, yes, I not infrequently got comments but had to date (some seven plus years and running) never had a negative comment or gesture, not even a hard glare. While standing in grocery store checkout lines, taking a walk in our neighborhood, getting a ticket at the movies, attending our Buddhist sangha, and getting acupuncture—in these varied contexts, I have received supportive remarks, usually just a simple, "I like your button." I always simply thank the person for saying so.

Although I'm sure some of you also wear these buttons, for years now the only other person I've actually seen wearing one is my wife Sally, who virtually always has one on either a jacket, scarf, or shoulder bag. Her experience has been exactly like mine.

I'm talking about this only because I want to encourage you to wear a button. (We've given out many over the years.)

Why would you do so?

Let me share a thought from David Shulman, founding member of Ta'ayush, an Israeli organization providing support to Palestinian residents in the South Hebron hills, where settlers frequently harass or attack them.

In a recent book on his work there, Shulman talks about confronting not only settlers but also the ever-present despair, and offers this by way of hope: "Maybe we can do something useful, in our own small way, for truth—by bearing witness, by not turning away. Truth, surprisingly, requires such assistance. The alternative is not appealing."

Wearing a button in support of Palestinians is a way of assisting truth, of bearing witness. And the more people carrying out this simple, easy act, the more other people grow in awareness that, "Oh, yeah, the Palestinians are being poorly treated, and deserve their rights." Ω

Editor's Note: We have buttons available to order: the one displayed above, another saying "We are all Palestinians," and one with "Peace" in English, Arabic, and Hebrew. To order yours, please send $1 per button to SS. Francis & Thérèse Catholic Worker, 52 Mason Street, Worcester, MA 01610. More designs and discounts for larger orders are available at: peaceproject.com.

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Founded in 1933 by Dorothy Day and Peter Maurin, the Catholic Worker is a lay movement serving the poor while denouncing injustice and proclaiming peace. We are not tax exempt. We rely entirely on the generosity of our supporters to meet our expenses. We welcome volunteers, letters, poetry, articles, artwork, and donations.

Pilgrimage

(Continued from Page 1)

Catholic Worker in Philadelphia, during a conference call with several of us in early December. Where were the survivors? The women? How could reform happen without them? (A few survivors, we later learned, spoke at the synod. Twelve women participated, ten of whom were superior generals of religious orders.) Our group wrote a letter to the US bishops, and one to Pope Francis requesting a broader representation of the Church at the summit, then planned our trip.

Even by Catholic Worker standards, this operation was hastily conceived. We departed for Rome without a well-planned schedule, or formal statement of purpose, our messaging displayed on yellow T-shirts that a harried Mr. Nguyen of HD Graphix hastily printed for us one overcast February afternoon in Worcester. Our requests were ambitious. We wanted the People of God to work for: an end to the violence of clericalism and clergy sex abuse, justice for survivors, and healing within the Church. None of this could happen without more women at the table. We said as much in our letter to beloved Pope Francis whose theology of mercy and whose care for the poor and environment we deeply appreciate.

Giuseppe Lami

> *...As you know well, women the excluded ones, were the first to recognize the Risen Christ in the Gospel. They saw the reality of Resurrection when the male disciples were still mired in fear and despair. If a 'resurrection' is to follow this crucifixion of the 'clergy sex abuse crisis' – and we believe it will – then the perspective of women will be needed....*

Our days in Rome were rich in heartfelt exchanges about the clergy sex abuse crisis and the state of the Church. Wearing the yellow T-shirts over our winter jackets, we stood each morning on the piazza outside the meeting hall of the synod to wave at the incoming cardinals. The piazza became its own place of informal summit. Here, we conversed with a few of the prelates, listened to survivors and their advocates, and fielded interviews with journalists who were curious about the yellow-shirted women. The afternoon of the synod's first day found us in earnest conversation with Callista Gingrich, US Ambassador to the Holy See. "I am with you," she said as we exited her elegant office for an evening vigil organized by Ending Clergy Abuse, a global network for survivors. As the last scraps of light flickered off the Tiber River, survivors from around the world recounted their brutal histories, then danced and danced, "for release," an organizer said, to the rhythm of two drummers. In charming Trastevere, we attended evening prayer and Mass with members of the Saint Egidio community at a church Saint Francis frequented. We joined survivors for the March to Zero, walking with them on that blustery Saturday from the sweeping Piazza del Popolo to the Castel Sant Angelo. The twelve female participants at the February meeting represented the highest number of women at any Vatican synod (astonishing for 2019!). On Monday, we met with some of them.

All this transpired in an ancient city that was once the hub of empire and extraordinary artistic achievement, much of it inspired by Catholic world view. To walk its streets surrounded by an abundance of beauty and immense architecture humbles one's perspective. The Church's present-day trouble appear as merely one of many the city has witnessed throughout the millenia.

Friends in the US regard the clergy sex abuse scandal as another symptom of a Church that is ossifying, doomed to dwindle into herself, if She does not evolve. The Rome pilgrimage gave me a different view. I made the journey not to observe Church Magnificent but Church Exposed and in a terrible mess. And yet, like any good pilgrimage, this one encouraged faith. I return feeling a deep tenderness and gratitude for Catholicism's incarnational theology, so preposterous and splendid. Christ present in the dirt and glory of living.

Our mornings on the piazza provided an opportunity to personally observe believers reckoning with intimate violence, betrayal, and abuse of power. Yes, there were horrible exposés and many tears. Amid the raw vulnerability I also saw life-giving revelations and hearty faith. Finding their own voice and each other, the survivors are ensuring shame and secrecy do not contaminate how we resolve the harm of sexual abuse. In his call for communal reckoning, Pope Francis is doing this as well.

"What do you want the Church to do?" journalists in Rome repeatedly asked us. "What can *we* do?' is the question we are asking ourselves as we resume our busy lives. It's a question that would make Pope Francis proud. While in Rome, we were surprised to discover we were the only group accompanying the survivors. More solidarity is clearly in order here. Sexual abuse is not uniquely Catholic. What we learn in confronting it can benefit others. I pray the Church's efforts —the efforts of *all* the People of God— to rectify this harm will lead to a deeper reverence for the miracle of the body, the only physical container we humans have for our precious souls. Ω

Benjamins

(Continued from Page 1)

happy to organize an itinerary, but, after numerous meetings, McGovern declined. His aide told us, "What good would it do for Jim to visit the West Bank and then lose his seat in Congress?" Just visiting Palestinians was seen as political suicide.

So powerful is the lobby in favor of Israel that merely presenting information about Israeli oppression is often called anti-Semitic. Although many more Palestinians

"We will now observe a moment of silencing opponents of the Israeli Occupation."

have been killed by Israelis than Israelis by Palestinians, Americans have been led to believe the exact opposite. Despite the fact that Israel occupies more than two million Palestinians and Syrians who enjoy few political rights, Democrats and Republicans alike call Israel a democracy. Severe sanctions and a constant threat of war against Iran are employed to prevent the "nuclearization of the Middle East," while nothing is said about Israeli nukes. The blind-eye approach to Israel surpasses the stance America used to employ with Latin American dictators.

But, we must remember that political policies that fly in the face of social justice do not fall from the sky. Politicians were misled, pressured, and/or bribed into an unholy alliance with the tobacco industry, and are still largely in the grasp of the gun, fossil fuel, and pro-Israel lobbies. To suggest otherwise is naive.

Following her apology, Representative Omar said, "At the same time, I reaffirm the problematic role of lobbyists in our politics, whether it be AIPAC, the NRA, or the fossil fuel industry. It's gone on too long, and we must be willing to address it." Meanwhile, House judiciary committee chairman, Jerrold Nadler, accused her of "playing on old stereotypes of Jews as money-grubbing influence-peddlers." Does Nancy Pelosi believe AIPAC's millions of lobbying dollars, much of them used to take members of Congress on pro-Israel tours, have no influence at all? She certainly believes the Citizens United decision by the US Supreme Court that flooded elections with billions of corporate contributions is bad for democracy.

While the NRA continues to dominate politics, at least now it has visible critics whose arguments make it into the press and onto the floor of the Congress. Emotionally-charged labeling to stifle debate squeezed out gun-control advocates for decades. President Trump was quick to call Representative Occasio Cortez's Green New Deal "socialism." Rather than criticizing policies factually, name-calling takes center stage. At a time when violence against Palestinians by Jewish settlers in the West Bank is at historic highs, tarring critics of Israel like Omar as anti-Semites allows injustice to go unchallenged.

Unlike *The Washington Post* and *The New York Times* whose reporting included multiple critics of Omar and no supporters, the British-based *Guardian* quoted *Intercept* columnist Mehdi Hasan's query: "Why is it OK to talk about Saudi lobbies, and Saudis buying Trump, and Saudi-first policies, why is it not Islamophobic to say all of that, but it's anti-Semitic when it comes to Israel?" Even more impressive, *The Forward,* which describes itself as "Jewish. Fearless. Since 1897," ran a column by Peter Feld entitled "No, Ilhan Omar Is Not Anti-Semitic For Calling Out Aipac." In his column, Feld wrote, "The problem is, all lobbies, by definition, are designed to exert secret control over policy, using money. That's what they do."

At least *The New York Times* headline said "Ilhan Omar apologizes for statements condemned as anti-Semitic," while *The Boston Globe* entitled its story: "Congresswoman sorry for anti-Semitic remark." *The Post* chose to put "anti-Semitic Tropes" in quotation marks.

On a positive note, *The Times* did say Representative Rashida Tlaib (D-Michigan), a Palestinian-American whose mother lives in the Israeli-occupied West Bank, is "trying to organize her own congressional trip to the West Bank to give lawmakers the Palestinian side of the issue." A 2009 trip to Gaza by US Representatives Brian Baird (D-Washington) and Keith Ellison (D-Minnesota) proved transformative. While there, Baird said, "The amount of physical destruction and the depth of human suffering here is staggering." Ellison said, "People, innocent children, women and non-combatants, are going without water, food, and sanitation, while the things they so desperately need are sitting in trucks at the border, being denied permission to go in."

Personal exposure to the injustice that ordinary women, men, and children suffer is invaluable. I can only hope and pray that many lawmakers accompany Tlaib when she goes to the West Bank.

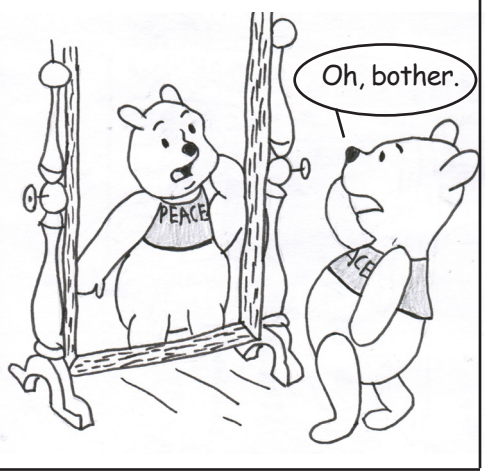
First-hand information about the

reality of apartheid helped transform politicians' view of the South African regime from reliable anti-communist ally to racist oppressor. That change encouraged policies that proved instrumental in the multi-racial rebirth of South Africa. Similar knowledge about Israeli oppression of the Palestinians can help transform Israel as well. Ω

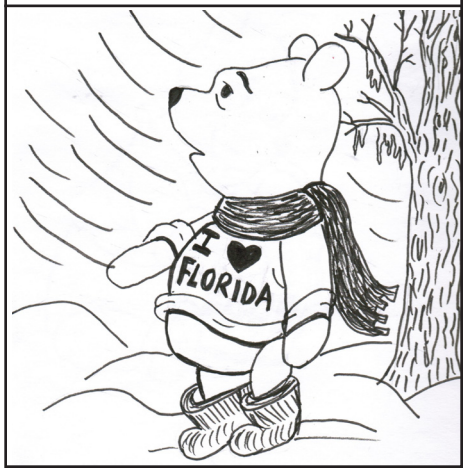
Scottie the Pooh

Last May, Pooh and his friend Piglet qualified for the 2019 Boston Marathon.

By Christmas, though, Pooh had gained a lot of weight.

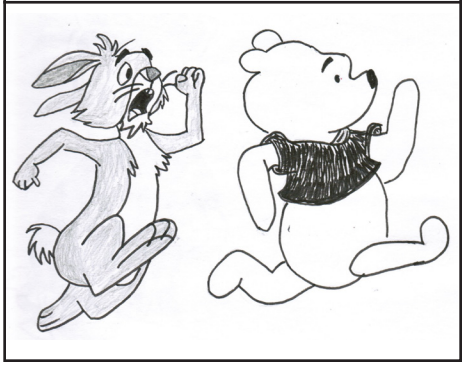


To get in shape, Pooh had to train in the ice and wind and snow.



Unfortunately, the more Pooh ran, the more Pooh ate.

And, despite the risk of injury, nobody could convince Pooh not to try to beat every rabbit during his training runs.

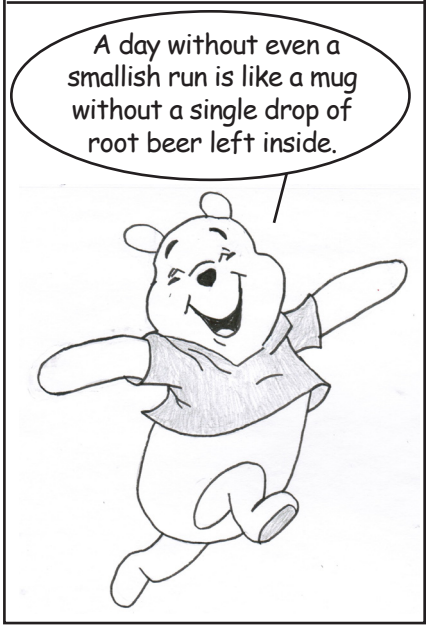


Some discouraged Pooh.

Some encouraged him

Owl analyzed him.

But Scottie Pooh has his own philosophy.



To My White Catholic Sisters & Brothers

by James Murphy

Editor's Note: This article is reprinted from the Winter, 2019 issue of The Rochester *[New York]* Catholic Worker.

Open Wide Our Hearts: The Enduring Call to Love, A Pastoral Letter Against Racism was approved by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops on November 14, 2018. Pastoral letters are rare events and are meant to be read, studied, and discussed by all American Catholics. Recent events in Washington, DC involving Covington, Kentucky Catholic high school students have sparked a lot of discussion with a wide range of opinions and interpretations. Further reflection and discernment on what that event means is still ongoing. I am not writing to weigh in on the ambiguities of the Lincoln Memorial encounter; I'm more concerned with the fact that many students were wearing hats with the "Make America Great Again" slogan. The MAGA slogan and the red hats they are printed on are a new symbol of racism and have no place on the heads of faithful Catholics. White Catholics must recognize and clearly acknowledge that America has not been great in the past, nor is it great now, for Native Americans, African Americans, Hispanics, Asians, and all people who are not white. We need to be frank and clear; America has been mostly great for white people, and especially white men. We need to understand that to our sisters and brothers of Color, MAGA means Make America White Again. For another cultural perspective, I suggest reading a thoughtful article by CNN columnist Isaac Bailey: "Why Trump's MAGA Hats Have Become a Potent Symbol of Racism."

Open Wide Our Hearts outlines American racism's historic roots and how it persists:

> "Native Americans were killed, imprisoned, sold into slavery, and raped."
>
> "Africans were bought and sold as mere property, often beaten, raped, and literally worked to death."
>
> "The generational effects of slavery, segregation, and the systemic use of violence—including the lynching of more than 4,000 black men, women, and children across 800 different counties throughout the United States between 1877 and 1950—are realities that must be fully recognized and addressed in any process that hopes to combat racism."
>
> "…there have been over 550 documented cases of Hispanics being lynched, and experts estimate that the number could actually be twice as large."
>
> "...too often racism comes in the form of the sin of omission, when individuals, communities, and even churches remain silent and fail to act against racial injustice when it is encountered."

MAGA = RACISM

If we are to take *Open Wide Our Hearts* seriously, we cannot stay silent regarding the MAGA hat's meaning and the harm it causes. President Donald Trump has [made many] racist remarks. He has especially targeted Muslims and tried to ban them from entering the country. He has separated Hispanic families at the border and made no apologies when he described Mexicans as "…bringing drugs. They're bringing crime. They're rapists." We must not forget the pivotal moment in Charlottesville when, after two days of not commenting, he declared that there "were very fine people on both sides." One of the sides he was referring to were white supremacists. By wearing those hats, we are dressing ourselves in his racist rhetoric and promoting it.

Sadly, in the public statements issued by the Diocese of Covington (DOC), no mention is made of the large number of MAGA hats worn by young Catholics. The DOC has promised a full investigation, and I hope they take a hard look at the MAGA hats. However, I'm more alarmed that most Catholic adults have been publicly silent regarding the presence of the hats. In conversations with fellow white Catholics, when I bring the MAGA hats up, they agree the hats had no place in DC, but say nothing.... When we are silent, we commit sin by omission, which ultimately promotes racism. Most of the social media posts made by local Catholic organizations and individuals regarding the incident made no mention of the MAGA hats. They should apologize for this oversight and publicly recognize the hats' racist symbolism.

One wonders if the young men were wearing these hats at the March for Life. If so, this sends a conflicting message as the bishops in *Open Wide Our Hearts* "unequivocally state that racism is a life issue." Catholics can't fight for the lives of the unborn while donning a racist symbol that dehumanizes the living. I applaud the courage and words of Bishop John Stowe of the Diocese of Lexington who wrote "…it astonishes me that any students participating in a pro-life activity on behalf of their school and their Catholic faith could be wearing apparel sporting the slogans of a president who denigrates the lives of immigrants, refugees, and people from countries that he describes with indecent words and haphazardly endangers with life-threatening policies."

I pray that all Catholics read, study and discuss the bishops' letter against racism. I look forward to, and pray for, the successful implementation of *Open Wide Our Hearts* across the nation. Considering our almost collective silence, the timing is right for such a letter. I also pray this letter will be only one of many tools to overcome the sin of racism in our hearts, our Church, our society, and in all the structures that have consistently failed people of Color.

For the past two years, the community of St. Joseph's House of Hospitality has been struggling to honestly combat the racism in our hearts and within the structure of St. Joe's. Eradicating racism under our roof is proving to be hard work. I've learned that removing racism from my heart is an ongoing process that takes more than just reading documents. I am fortunate to live in a diverse community that has the patience and the love to work with me, even when I've said or done something racist. Thank you to my sisters and brothers at St. Joseph's House of Hospitality....You have all taught me very much, and I have much more to learn. Peace. Ω

LETTERS

Dear Claire & Scott,
I enjoyed your last newsletter with the article "Notes from the Border." Thanks for putting a spotlight on the borderlands, and visiting the San Diego area. I've lived 14 years along the Arizona and New Mexico border. I write this on the day that the President is focused on building his wall. His vision is so far from reality. When he describes the borderlands in a "crisis," I don't recognize the place he is supposedly describing.

It is disconcerting that instead of a compassionate policy toward our neighbors to the south fleeing danger, our governmental leaders see them as an enemy. We should be building bridges, not walls.

Fr. David Buer, OFM
Elfrida, Arizona

Dear Scott,
I admire what Claire chronicled in *The Catholic Radical* about her and your trip to the border to support the migrant caravan. Also, Miriam's article/musings are wonderful.

Although a small portion of the paper, I think the "Expected Better" column is based on at least two flawed premises.

In a purely philosophical sense, protecting a right to life is more important and should be upheld over a right to choice, and that there are real human beings involved, and not to get lost in code words. Also, you seem to be a little less than categorical in your conclusions.

However, you are referring to abortion and not the medical care that's so often associated with it. I think it is correct to call what Planned Parenthood does "reproductive healthcare," given that most of their services are not an abortion procedure, including cancer screenings, STD testing, providing artificial birth control (which I entirely support), and the morning after pill, which is, so I've gathered, not an abortifacient.

You somewhat recognize there are instances of unintended pregnancies other than rape. I heard of one study that surveyed and found that one third of women going to clinics that provide abortion reported a phenomenon called "birth control sabotage" by their partner. Also, a lot of women do not even know they are pregnant at six weeks, hence the necessity of later-term abortion. Even partial birth abortion is a very complicated medical decision, not nearly as cut and dry and insidious and diabolical as it's made out to be by some pro-life advocates.

I will try to connect with the [weekly peace] vigil a little more and look forward to participating in some sort of action on climate change.

David Maciewski
Worcester, Massachusetts

Editor's Note: As pacifists, we oppose all organizations that take human life, while recognizing that many of these organizations also perform services we support. The "Expected Better" article appealed for accurate language that does not obscure the taking of human lives. We believe honest language is essential in the quest for nonviolent responses to especially difficult problems.

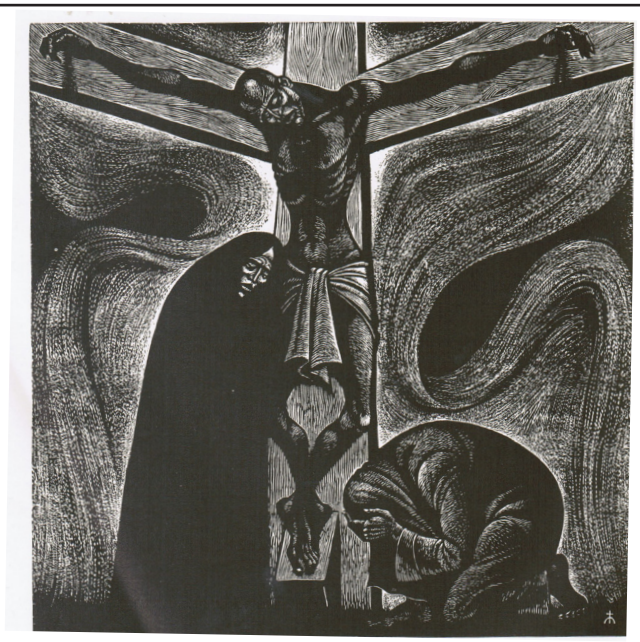
Dear Claire and Scott,
Thank you for the Feb/March issue of *The Catholic Radical*. The visit to the San Diego/Tijuana border made great reading and your concern for the migrants touched me deeply.

The last ten years of my active priesthood were spent ministering to migrants in an East Boston parish, mostly from Central America, undocumented, and poorly treated. Twice I traveled south. First to San Antonio to hear the best theologians, then to Nogales on the Mexican border where I met some of the Samaritans who go into the desert with water, food, and medicine. Inspiring people, now being harassed by the US government. Blessings to you and your loved ones.

Father John Doyle
Boston, Massachusetts

Catholic Worker Calendar

April 19 — Stations of the Cross: Join us for our annual procession through the streets of Worcester to commemorate Christ's passion and ways in which contemporary issues relate to it. Departing from 52 Mason Street at Noon. Bread and soup to follow.



Since its founding in 1933, a core principle of the Catholic Worker movement has been opposition to racism. The etching above by Fritz Eichenberg, which he called "Black Crucifixion," ran on the front page of the New York Catholic Worker in 1962.

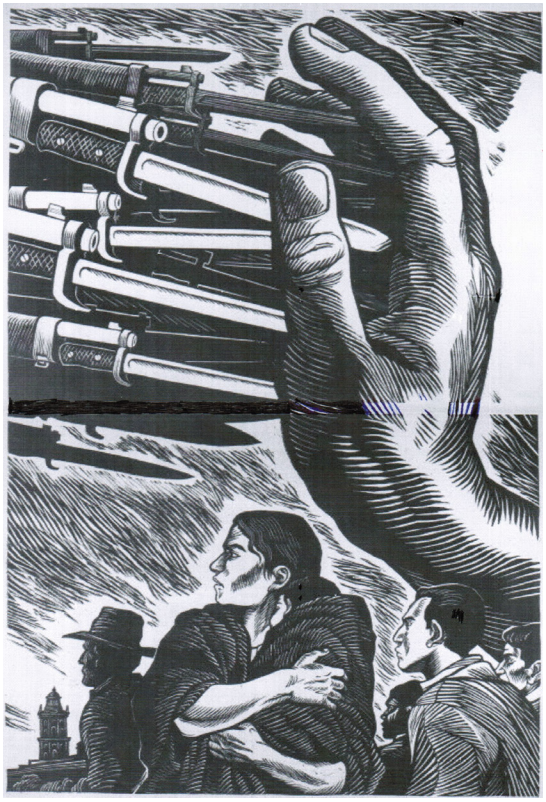
April 10 & 24, May 8 & 22 — Evening Prayer: Join us for prayer and Taizé chant. 7 P.M., 52 Mason Street, Refreshments to follow.

April 20 & May 11 — Vigil to Reverse the Gun Culture: Join us at The Gun Parlor shooting range. 12:30-1:30 P.M., 170 Prescott Street, Worcester.

Mason Street Musings

The *New York Times* reported on March 11: "US air strikes ramping up in Somalia." Three hundred and twenty six people were killed in 2018 and 225 in the first two months of 2019 alone. I consider myself a newshound and I must confess that I did not know the US had been bombing Somalia. Thirty years ago, such military action would have sparked major demonstrations. Today, with American troops fighting in Syria, Afghanistan, and God knows where else, we have become numb to war. The Somalia story runs deep in the paper and below the fold.

Meanwhile, more and more young people are rising up all over the world to say no to violence, injustice, and all manner of seemingly intractable evil. In a part of Pakistan where education for girls faced lethal opposition from Taliban militants, a 14-year-old girl, Malala Yousafzai, spoke out and continued doing so even after the Taliban tried to assassinate her. After surviving the 2018 Parkland, Florida shooting massacre, high school students Emma Gonzalez, David Hogg, and others are leading a national movement for gun control. A 16-year-old Swedish girl, Greta Thunberg, has ignited global school strikes demanding that adults take urgent action against climate change. Malala won the Nobel Peace Prize, the youngest person ever to do so. David and Emma have faced off against the NRA and politicians, like Senator Ted Cruz, in the gun lobby's pocket. Greta chastised business and government leaders at the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland.



Alberto Beltrán

When we see desperately poor families turned away at our borders, unarmed people of color killed by police, civilians killed in war, the planet being destroyed by climate change, and mass shooting after mass shooting after mass shooting, we are tempted to despair, but must not. Every individual hand raised for justice can stop a dozen bayonets. Easter teaches us how love prevails over hatred and death.

Miriam König, our 19-year-old intern has returned to Germany. Like Malala, Emma, David, Greta, and all young leaders, she defied the odds, never even mentioning during her Feb/March "Musings" that she is blind.

As Claire and I get older, we need more people to step up like Miriam did to serve the poor, to decry injustice, to promote peace, and to protect the planet from harm. Most people, young and old, underestimate their potential. The Catholic Worker movement reminds us all that God's grace backs us up when we try to do good. As in Alberto Beltrán's graphic, our tiny hands become mighty tools. Come for an hour, come for a day, come for a lifetime. However long, I'm sure all of those who have volunteered here since 1986 would agree, your time at Saints Francis & Thérèse Catholic Worker will be exciting and richly blessed. Ω

Scott

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